1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

782 next day the weather was fine. This particular method of
424 praying had been learnt by one of his ancestors in the begin-
821 ning of time, and was afterwards transmitted in his family.
[785] With the coming of the white man and consequent decay of
[177] customs, it has not been exercised since the death of the grand-father of the man from whom the information was obtained.

SACRIFICE

782 It might be expected that a clear division should be made between the subjects of prayer and sacrifice, but in practice they merge into one another. A mountain goat hunter, when camped near a glacier which he knows to be the haunt of some dreaded supernatural being, asks help from him. He wears
[824] dyed and undyed cedar-bark decorations to make his request more ceremonious, and after the prayer throws them into the fire, saying:

"Please accept these, supernatural one," thus making an offering to supplement his verbal petition.

[824] If he is even more cautious, or eager not to offend any
[825] supernatural being in the vicinity, he throws on the fire tufts
[26] of cedar-bark, eagle down, and scraps of food as well. Whether or not the objects thus destroyed by the flames reach the being to whom the request has been made, is a matter upon which the Bella Coola do not theorise; but the generosity and self-denial of the donor is appreciated, and a favour is often granted in return. A man who frequently hears in his dreams the voice of some supernatural being, knows that it is taking an interest in his doings and endeavours to propitiate it, by placing on a fire tithits of any food he has obtained, saying at the same time:

"*Wai, wai, wai,*" "More, more, more," that is, "May I receive more of the same."

A foolish person fails to show his appreciation of favours received, but a wise man never forgets to do so.

[502] Likewise a person is careful to propitiate supernatural
[139] powers when in peril. Both at Kwatna and at Mesatche Nose,
[756]

I:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

621
623 ters, and the village constitutes a unit for all dances; in fact
[535] this ceremonial unity is its most important function.
[796] With the exception of a few villages built on the seashore,
each Bella Coola settlement consists of a row of houses on the
361 river bank. These are of the usual rectangular, plank-built
[184] type typical of the North-West Coast. In front of them
[342] stretches a sidewalk, usually supported by piles on the side
[171] nearest the river to make it level. The houses, too, in many
cases have piles beneath their front ends, made necessary by
the steep slope of the bank. In large villages there may be two
rows of houses, behind and above one another. Usually there
[487] is a rough path parallel to the row of houses at the very edge
[164] of the river. The number of houses varies; before the smallpox
epidemic some villages contained as many as thirty or forty,
others, only two or three. There is no definite arrangement of
the houses; anyone may build where there is a vacant space.
[433] Much the same arrangement occurs in the sea-coast villages,
each of which depends for its main sustenance on an ocean
fish-trap, as the river villages depend on a salmon-weir.

342 The central part of each house is occupied by a large fire,
[354] often sunk a considerable distance below the level of the floor,
and around this is an open space free to all. Toward the side-
walls are raised the partitions, forming bedrooms for the dif-
ferent families, or for different members of one. In many cases
the flooring is removed in three or four parts of the house for
small fires on which different groups cook, the central fire
being used for heating and for more important meals. The
[572] number of families occupying a house depends on its size; an
[622] important chief, with many relatives, often builds an enormous
house which is occupied by ten or more families; smaller houses
contain only two or three. Life in the larger houses is free
and open; people are constantly passing in and out, and any-
[261] one present when food is being distributed is given a share as
[353] a matter of course. Most of the houses are decorated with
carved upright posts and paintings on the beams and back-wall.
[535] A door through the latter leads to the back-room, so important
in dances.

6:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1892
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

844 fessional midwives. The child is washed in warm water. For ten days
[846] the mother must remain in this hut. Father and mother must not go
[825] near the room for a year (according to Nuk'sla'sta, for ten days), else the salmon would take offence.

553 The child is soon given its first name. On this occasion the whole
[852] tribe is invited to a feast, the name is made public, and the guests receive
[556] small presents. The child retains this name until it becomes a member of the Kû'siôt, when it is given its Kû'siôt name. This ceremony takes place after puberty has been reached. About this period the young man gives his first potlatch and assumes the Qê'mtsica name.

881 When a girl reaches puberty she must stay in the shed which serves as her bedroom, where she has a separate fireplace. She is not allowed to descend to the main part of the house, and must not sit by the fire of the family. For four days she must remain motionless in a sitting posture. She fasts during the daytime, but is allowed a little food and drink at a very early hour in the morning. After this term she may leave her room, but only through a separate opening. She must not yet
[292] come to the main room. When leaving the house she wears a large hat,
[821] which protects her face against the rays of the sun. It is believed that if the sun should shine on her face her eyes would suffer. She may pick berries on the hills, but must not come near the river or sea for a whole year. She must not eat fresh salmon, else she would lose
[265] her senses, or her mouth would be transformed into a long beak. She
[26] must not chew gum or eat snow (see Fifth Report of Committee, 1889, p. 538).

584 If a young man wishes to marry a girl he goes, surrounded by his
[431] friends, to the house of the girl's father and states his intention. His friends carry food and presents, and if the father accepts the suit he sends out a young man, who receives the food and presents and carries them into the house. Sometimes the father does not accept the offer at once. In such cases the young man may repeat the same ceremony until he is finally rejected or accepted. After the time of the marriage has
[527] been agreed upon between the contracting parties, and the day preceding the marriage has arrived, the young man invites all the people to a feast, during which he states that he is to be married on the following day. He asks a number of men, generally from twenty to thirty, and four
[302] women to assist him. On the following forenoon they assemble, and accompany the bridegroom to the girl's house. They sing outside, and
585 four of the men dance. All of them have their faces painted red. Finally they enter, and the bridegroom gives a large amount of property to the girl's father. Then the girl leaves her parents and goes to the bridegroom, bringing him also a large amount of property which has been
[431] given to her for this purpose by her parents and relatives. He in turn gives her blankets and other apparel of the best quality, and distributes presents among her relatives. This is repeated after some time. All he has given to his bride and her relatives is repaid to him with interest. A rich girl will repay twice or three times the amount given by the man. At the time of the marriage the bride's father may promise the groom to give him his Hâ'mats'a'xstis as soon as the pair have their first child.
[851] The children may belong to the father's or mother's gens, as the parents may choose.

586 In case of a separation the wife refunds the amount of purchase-money. The children may stay with either parent, or part of them may